

THE TRAIL OF THE BUGLES

In early fall

When the world is still,
There comes a call
By river and hill,—

A breath of the passion
Of Wilding Land
No lips can fashion,
No heart withstand.

The scarlet cry
Of a bugle's wail
Goes fading by
On a lonely trail;

And the heart of the year
Is braced and set
In battle gear
For the ages yet.

Once through the arch
Of the Autumn wood,
I saw the march
Of a giant brood.

I heard no tread
Of the warriors there,
But the hills were red
With the bugles' blare;

On the shadowy quest
That is never done,
They strode abreast
Of the wheeling sun;

With no retreat,
Through the hazy flume
They marched to beat
At the gates of doom;

For these were they
Whom glory sealed
In the brunt of the fray
On Sombre Field.

By a goblin road,

When the autumn line

By a goblin road,
Where the crimson line
Of maples glowed
In the deep blue pine,

Throng upon throng
They gathered and grew,
And all day long
On the hills they blew.

And ever, I dream
Of a host since then,
And the moving gleam
Of marching men.

My heart is hot
With the bugles' cry;
And tiring not,
Tho the world go by,

Possessed and wild,
I must on and on
Like a marching child
With the warriors wan.

But the low wind veers,
And the sun recedes
Through the leveled spears
Of the river reeds,—

Back to the dim
Auroral vast
Pale twilight rim
Of the world at last,

To the great release,
Where all trails wend,
And there is peace
At the Autumn's end.

To that still land
All things depart;
The fondling hand
And the foolish heart;

The dear spent youth
Of triumph and hate;
The dear bought truth
From the lips of fate;

The beautiful ghost
Of a perished prime,
Wandered and lost
On the moors of time;

The April days
With their shining hours,

The April days
With their shining hours,
The woodland ways
And the forest flowers;

The stir that wakes
In a swallow's wing
When slumber aches
At the heart of Spring;

The pulse that swells
In sapling and seed
When the frozen wells
Of the North are freed;

The sigh that passed
In a lull of the rain
To the outer vast,
On the long, refrain;

The grievous plight
Of the whippoorwills,
Teasing the night
In the summer hills;

The hermit thrush
With his golden dream;
The murmuring hush
Of the arrowy stream;

The noonday rest
Of the drowsy hern;
The unknown quest
Of the wandering tern;

Splendor and scorn
And ruin and sleep;
The windy morn
And the blue deep;

The drift sea-fogs
That whiten the sun;
The piping frogs
In Spring begun;

The core of life
In a buried hope,
That sprang to strife
In the larger scope,

And warred on doom
To the bitter end,
In the outer gloom
With death for friend;

Through the open door,
The days untold

Through the open door,
The days untold
That come no more
Though Spring grows old:

All these go down
To night on the hills;
And their renown,
As a babble of rills,

Through the lips of fame
Shall pass and die.
But one clear name
Is a thing to cry

In the bugles of God,
When the brave are few
And the flowering sod
Has a crimson dew,

Till the heart of man
Is at rest and set free,
And time is a span
Of the wind on the sea.

BLISS CARMAN.

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